

CORSICANA, TEX.

SUN NOV 11 1975

E & S - 9,830

Bush: the right man in the wrong spot

George Bush is one of the good guys when it comes to political party stalwarts. He's honest, puts a lot of effort into his work, and willing to do most anything his party asks.

It's a shame, then, that fellow Republican Gerald Ford has nominated him to be director of the Central Intelligence Agency in place of William Colby.

Bush deserves better from his party, but that's been his luck for several years now. Instead of rewarding him with one of the top jobs after he served as head of the Republican Party, Nixon named him ambassador to the United Nations, a job he handled quite capably.

Now he's our emissary in Peking, again not the plum of the diplomatic assignments.

Immediately after Ford announced Bush's change and that of Donald Rumsfeld to the defense department post speculation began over whether this meant one of the two men would be the next vice presidential nominee. And Ford himself didn't rule out that possibility.

We'd be surprised if Bush's move means he's being groomed for the vice president's office.

The switch from Peking to Washington does bring him home, of course, but that's the only advantage this job will have as far as politics.

In the first place, chief of the CIA

is not the job for a politician, and there's going to be a lot of people eyeing Bush's every move to see if he's manipulating the job along political lines.

In the second place, it's not a stepping-stone job. How many ex-CIA directors can you name that advanced higher in Washington?

Third, it's not a job likely to be popular with the voters. The CIA has a bad reputation across the country, and Bush, as part of that team, will become just "another one of the guys over there." He's in the same position as is Clarence Kelley with the FBI. Kelley had nothing to do with FBI activities under Nixon, but it's awfully hard for the public to differentiate between the old gang and the new.

Finally, Bush is replacing a man whose removal was questionable. Colby's only real sin seems to have been that he was too honest and open with House investigating committees. That makes Bush's appointment subject to charges of "cover-up."

Although we don't doubt for a minute that Bush will do a good job, it seems like Ford could have picked a man with a background more related to intelligence or law enforcement if he had the best interests of the CIA at heart.

And if his real motive was to boost Bush's political future, we just don't see how his heading the CIA will accomplish that purpose.